

March 18, 2010

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) issued the following statement in opposition to the proposed health care reform package expected to be taken up by the House of Representatives in the coming days:

"I have made my decision. I cannot support the health care package that is likely to be voted on later this week.

"There is no question we must fix our nation's broken health care system. I supported a health care bill last year that controlled costs for those with insurance and made insurance affordable for those without it. The health care package expected to be voted on in the coming days doesn't do enough to keep health care costs in check.

"I didn't come to this decision lightly. In the last few weeks, I have received tens of thousands of phone calls, faxes and emails from families and senior citizens - all telling me how they feel about health care reform. I've spoken with hundreds of people in grocery stores, at community events, and at my Congressional offices. I have talked to small business owners from Herkimer to Geneva who desperately need health care reform but, uniformly, they tell me this new proposal will hurt them and their employees across the board. I've listened to my constituents and have heard their concerns clearly.

"And after several meetings and conversations with the President, Speaker of the House, Administration officials and colleagues, I am not convinced enough changes can be made to the Senate health care bill to meet the needs of the people in my district.

"My opposition to this health care reform package is based on three items that I feel are essential if we hope to make insurance affordable for those who don't have it and lower costs for those who do have it.

- Doesn't allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices.

- Doesn't remove the anti-trust exemption for insurance companies;
- Includes an excise tax on high-quality health insurance plans (i.e. Cadillac Plans).

"I am not convinced that after months of listening, studying and debating that the current bill benefits the people in my district in the best possible way, and that's why I cannot support it."

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